



# CITY OF HOUSTON

**Sylvester Turner**

Mayor

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The Honorable Greg Abbott  
Governor of Texas  
P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Governor Abbott:

I am writing to urge your support for funding to promote a robust 2020 Census outreach to ensure that every Texan is counted. Past Texas Governors Clements and Bush issued executive orders to create State Complete Count Committees. These committees were tasked with promoting Census outreach. I urge you to secure funding of \$5 to \$10 million for this important priority. It is a small price to pay to make sure all our residents are counted, and every dollar invested will come back to Texas many times over.

Texans of all political philosophies can agree that we only stand to benefit by assuring a complete count. The Census determines the number of Congressional seats that will represent us in Washington, D.C.


As you are aware, funding for myriad federal programs is directly affected by the census count. A George Washington University report estimates that an undercount of just one percent would result in a *\$3 billion funding loss for Texas* over the decennial census interval. For Houston, alone, we estimate a loss of \$1,578 for each person uncounted.

Texas is home to many “hard to count” communities, which have low response rates and require targeted outreach to maximize accuracy. These communities include rural communities, large metropolitan areas, college towns and communities along our southern border.

Of course, one of the communities most difficult to count is the undocumented immigrant community. There is an increased climate of fear and distrust within this population due to heightened political rhetoric on the national level. The recent U.S. Department of Justice request to add a question about citizenship could make it even more challenging. The U.S. Constitution mandates that all persons living in the United States be counted, *regardless of citizenship or legal status*. There are at least seven lawsuits winding their way through the federal court system challenging this Department of Justice request. The U.S. Supreme Court will hear the case later this month. If the policy is upheld, mistrust will increase and the job of counting this hard-to-reach population will become even more onerous.

We all benefit from an accurate Census. I strongly urge you to do everything you can to make certain that every Texan is counted.

Sincerely,



Sylvester Turner  
Mayor